

The Present Truth, vol. 16

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William Warren Prescott

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1900

January 25, 1900

"The Royal Seed Is Planted in Babylon" The Present Truth, 16, 4.

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In His reply to the definite question from His disciples, "What shall be the sign of Thy coming and of the end of the world?" Jesus said, "This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." It is therefore both the sign of the Lord's coming, and the preparation for that glorious event, that it should be proclaimed everywhere that God in Christ is "the King eternal, immortal," and that "the Lord hath prepared His throne in the heavens; and His kingdom ruleth over all." *Psalm 103:19*. When this truth has been fully made known throughout all the world, and all have either yielded themselves as obedient servants to the rightful King, or have rejected Him, and said, "We will not have this Man to reign over us," then will be heard the "great voices in heaven" saying, "The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever." *Revelation 11:15*, R V. "Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Those who have rejected the Gospel of the kingdom, and have persisted in their allegiance to "the god of this world," will perish with their chosen king in the downfall of his kingdom. *PTUK January 25, 1900, page 52.1*

Every person in the world ought therefore to give earnest attention to this announcement of the Gospel of the kingdom. It is not a question of creed, or church, a more subject of theological controversy; it is not a question of weight of argument in the settlement of some religious dispute, which may well be left to those who enjoy each soul-destroying pastime; it is an intensely real and practical question, which effects the whole tenor of our lives. By this

announcement of the Gospel A the kingdom we are informed of the true state of affairs in this world; we learn of the original rebellion against the authority of “the King of heaven;” how that Lucifer, the light-bearer, became Satan, the adversary; how that through deception he turned man away from his allegiance to God, and by usurping his dominion became “god of this world;” how that God in His great love has made provision through the gift of Jesus, His life, His death, His resurrection, and His priesthood, that we should be rescued from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of His dear Son; how that in Jesus Christ, the Son of man, the Son of God, who “loved us and washed us, from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings” (*Revelation 1:5, 6*), the dominion will be restored, “and the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High.” *Daniel 7:27.PTUK January 25, 1900, page 53.1*

This Gospel of the kingdom is the one topic of the Scriptures. It is set forth in precept, prayer, and praise; it is the teaching of the prophecy, the history, and the biography of the Bible; it is the keynote of the life and teaching of Jesus, who began His ministry by “preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the Gospel.” *Mark 1:14, 15*. It covers the working out of God’s eternal purpose concerning man, from the first chapter of Genesis, where we find him made in the image and likeness of God, and having dominion over the works of His hands, through the experience of sin, when “we see not yet all things put under him,” until we find him in the last chapter of Revelation, again a faithful servant of the rightful King, having God’s name in his forehead, once more a king, who “shall reign for ever and ever.” *PTUK January 25, 1900, page 53.2*

THE QUESTION TO BE SETTLED

The Gospel message goes forth “with a loud voice,” saying, “Behold your God,” “Fear God and give glory to Him.... and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.” *Isaiah 40:9. Revelation 14:7*. Thus each one is brought to face and to settle these questions, “Who is the Lord, that I should obey His

voice?" What is the nature of this kingdom of God? Is there any clear evidence that it shall stand for ever?" Upon what principles is it established that it should be "an everlasting kingdom?" The history of the world, read in the light shining from the Scriptures, will give a clear and decided answer to all these questions. It is not a matter of theory or of philosophical speculation, but an experience which has been wrought out in the centuries of human history. But in order to trace with profit the lessons taught in the apparently entangled course of events of these centuries, we must read the history from God's standpoint, opening this storehouse of knowledge with the key which He has placed in our hands. And it is especially important that this should be done in this generation, because the history of the past is being repeated in the history of to-day, and the true interpretation of present history is given to us in the Lord's own interpretation of past history as the guide in the correct understanding of His prophecies concerning this time just before the coming of the King.*PTUK January 25, 1900, page 53.3*

In the book of Daniel, concerning which Jesus said, "Whoso readeth, let him understand," we have in small compass a divinely-written history of the world from the time of "Babylon, the glory of kingdoms," to "the end of the days." Here we have the key to the correct interpretation of all history. Here we have the principles of the kingdom of heaven plainly revealed in contrast with the principles inculcated by the "god of this world," and all this upon the actual stage of human action, a living panorama. Here is traced in bold outline the controversy which has been waged during all these centuries in the effort of the prince of this world," to set up a permanent kingdom on this earth that shall rival the kingdom of God. Here we see the outcome of this controversy, with such light upon the present as enables us to understand the nature of the events just before the setting up of God's everlasting kingdom. It is because "this Gospel of the kingdom" is so plainly preached in the book of Daniel, that we invite attention to it at this time.*PTUK January 25, 1900, page 53.4*

"In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, name Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim, king of Judah, into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God; which he carried into the land of

Shinar, to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the house of his god." *PTUK January 25, 1900, page 53.5*

In the opening sentences of the book the kingdom question is presented. Two earthly kings are warring with each other, and the Lord decides the issue of the conflict. And it will be seen that it is decided in a way to spread abroad in all the earth the knowledge of the kingdom of God, to preach the Gospel of the kingdom. But how does it happen that Jehoiakim, *king of Judah*, is overcome by Nebuchadnezzar, *king of Babylon*? Why are the Lord's people conquered by the heathen? "The walls of Jericho falling at the shout of faith, and Israel turning "their backs before their enemies" at once furnish the answer. "Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed My covenant which I commanded them." *Joshua 7:11*. "Jehoiakim... did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord." *2 Chronicles 36:5*. Furthermore, the Lord never intended that His people should have any king but Himself. When the people demanded a king, God said of them, "They have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them." He it was who would have given them victory over all their enemies, and have made them "the head and not the tail," above, and not beneath, "that thou hearken unto the commandments of the Lord thy God," But when they chose a visible king in the place of the "King eternal, immortal, invisible," and he departed from the Lord, they lost the working of that "eternal power through faith in which kingdoms are subdued (*Hebrews 11:33*), and were carried captive by the heathen. It is also true that the Lord works through His people to preach the Gospel of His kingdom throughout the world, and thus to restrain the kingdom of evil; but when they became self centered, and shut this influence upon conduct when those light away from the heathen, then the Lord overruled this very failure which gave them into the lands of the heathen as the means of accomplishing the work which they neglected to do in a time of prosperity. Thus the truth to be learned by each individual is that "the kingdom of God is... righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost;" that "a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom;" that "the kingdom of God is within you." And the truth to be learned about worldly kingdoms is that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will." It is only in the light of these principles these the experiences of individuals and nations can he

read aright. These are the themes of the book of Daniel.*PTUK January 25, 1900, page 53.6*

The sacred vessels were removed from the house of God, and were displayed in the heathen temple, as the outward tokens of the Superiority of the gods and the religion of Babylon over the God and the religion of the Jews. Alas, that “the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles” by those who profess, but do not have faith in Him, “who is over all, God blessed for ever.” But the truth will triumph, even though its day of victory is often delayed by the unfaithfulness of those who profess to believe it.*PTUK January 25, 1900, page 54.1*

“And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes; children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and tongue of the Chaldeans. And the king appointed them a daily portion of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king. Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah: unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel the name of Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach, and to Azariah, of Abednego.”*PTUK January 25, 1900, page 54.2*

Some of the captives, who had the best physical appearance and who gave evidence of possessing intellectual ability already well developed, were selected for training that “they might stand before the king.” They were “children,” “lads,” probably in their teens, just at the age when surroundings usually have the most powerful influence upon conduct, when those who are not controlled by a living principle within are swayed to and fro by the pressure of outward circumstances.*PTUK January 25, 1900, page 54.3*

With the evident purpose that these young captives should retain their good physical appearance, and that they should make rapid

progress in “the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans” the king provided for them what he regarded as the best diet, just such food and wine as was found upon his own table. It was a royal bill of fare, “as supplied to his majesty the king,” but the king was the king of Babylon. The question of the kingdom is thus before these young men. Shall they follow the instruction of their real King, or that of the king of Babylon? Will the fact that they have been chosen for training, that they may serve the king of Babylon, lead them to excuse a departure from right principle, with the plea that they are captives and in Babylon, and that when in Babylon, they must do as the Babylonians do? Will it really make so much difference after all what they eat and drink, provided they hold fast to their creed, and are well prepared to defend it against the heathen? Thus does the more formalist betray his trust, substituting argument for conduct, sound for substance. Thus do all those think, who regard religion as merely a round of ceremonies, and God’s commandments as simply arbitrary requirements. To all such the kingdom is outward, visible fleshly; and they are easily persuaded that one form is as good as another, and that God is not so particular about these matters, so long as we maintain a sort of ethereal atmosphere about us which is sometimes mistaken for spirituality, and boasted of as that liberty by which we keep the law in the spirit, and so are privileged to disregard it in the letter. Such is the modern idea of Gospel liberty. In this way does convenience dictate to principle, obedience becomes a mere matter of circumstance, and the kingdom of heaven becomes the kingdom of Babylon. W. W. PRESCOTT. *PTUK January 25, 1900, page 54.4*

February 1, 1900

“Plain Living Ensures Good Health in Babylon” The Present Truth, 16, 5.

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Although the king of Babylon changed the name of Daniel, and gave him the name of Belteshazzar, according to the name of his god, yet his character remained unchanged, and he continued loyal to the King of heaven and the principles of that kingdom, as is shown by the record.*PTUK February 1, 1900, page 69.1*

“But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king’s meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs. And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your meat and your drink; for why should he see your faces worse liking than the children which are of your sort? then shall ye make me endanger my head to the king.”*PTUK February 1, 1900, page 69.2*

It is clear that Daniel understood the gospel of the kingdom, and how the matter of eating and drinking was related to it. He did not ask for a change of diet merely because the food provided for him was different from that to which he had been accustomed, or because he wanted something which would please his palate better. He was acting, upon principle. He had learned that the kingdom of God is within you, “that he was the temple of the living God,” that “the Spirit (life) of God dwelleth in you,” and that “if any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy: for the temple of God is holy.” Although he was a captive in the dominion of the king of Babylon, yet he did not forget that God was his King, and that the principles of His kingdom were still to control in his life. The test came upon the question of food and drink. Should he follow the diet prescribed by the king of Babylon, or that prescribed by the King of heaven? The basis upon which he rested his choice reveals

the true relationship between food and character, and shows how we may work with God or against Him in His plan to restore His image in us, and thus to place us again in dominion over the works of His hands.*PTUK February 1, 1900, page 69.3*

